

Historical Advisory Committee (HAC)

Minutes October 13, 2021

Meeting held at the Mid County Regional Library, Meeting Room A/B.

Committee Members

Dianne Munson
Theresa Murtha
Pat Spence
Valerie Colbert
Clare Riggs
Deborah Blair
Stephen Valdes

Present

Dianne Munson
Pat Spence
Clare Riggs
Theresa Murtha
Valerie Colbert

Not Present

Deborah Blair
Stephen Valdes

BOCC Liaison:

Commissioner Stephen R. Deutsch

Guests

None

Libraries & History Staff

Jennifer Zoebelein

9:00 a.m. Roll Call; 2 absentees not recognized

Approval of June, July, and September meeting minutes: Reviewed minutes, Valerie asked that the spelling of her name be corrected, Dianne mentioned that she doesn't want general conversation recorded in the minutes. Valerie motioned to vote on minutes with corrections. All voted in favor.

Agenda Items:

How to promote History related events and Historical Tourism: Theresa mentioned she would like to see a county-wide plan for increasing historical tourism. Some previously mentioned ideas include the creation of a brochure to indicate the location of historic markers and other relevant historic sites. Although Dianne stated that there had been attempts to do this in the past with little interest, Theresa said they were worth looking into again. Valerie also brought up that she thought there used to be a flyer with the QR code for the historical markers and questioned whether the older flyers still existed someplace; Jennifer will investigate this. Theresa and Valerie agreed this could be a useful starting point and placed throughout the county, thus available to tourists during their visit. Jennifer mentioned the Libraries and History website as a place for information as well. Valerie brought up the geocache program, and Jennifer mentioned the availability of flyers at several of the historic cemeteries.

Theresa stated that it would be nice to go beyond Charlotte County, and raised the question of reaching other counties, as she has noticed very little on the tourism website. She suggested the placement of brochures at stops along the highway as people travel into Florida, and an overall plan for historical tourism. She also raised the following questions: How do we go about putting something together? Do we do it as a committee? Does County admin do it? Who would be responsible? Theresa then asked Commissioner Deutsch if he knew who would be responsible. He stated that County Admin would likely put forward the ideas and receive feedback/comments before making a final plan; HAC recommendations would be reviewed and considered. Janette added that the HAC should gather materials and ideas, then make a recommendation to the BCC. Theresa also

mentioned a small centrally located museum, and Commissioner Deutsch reiterated that the BCC is always receptive to ideas and suggestions.

Theresa brought up the tourism budget, which could be used to create and/or preserve buildings etc. Commissioner Deutsch added that he thinks that's a link that could be developed, acknowledging that this committee is very in tune with a lot of the events, activities, and sites of historical significance in the community, knowledge which could be passed on to Tourism and be part of their marketing program. He also stated how many different groups of people come to visit our area for all different reasons, and part of this committee's job could be to work with tourism to come up with a long-term plan. Dianne stated that Sean from Tourism would be at next month's meeting and that these ideas could be brought up then. Theresa spoke of putting together a detailed plan for the November meeting and how that could be sent to all committee members; Janette suggested sending the document to Jennifer, who would send it to the rest of the committee, and if anyone else wanted to contribute to the list, they could send that to Jennifer.

Dianne asked Jennifer about Centennial events for the remainder of the year. Jennifer mentioned that the "Old Fashioned Picnic" @ Englewood Library, scheduled for October 30, would be a drive-thru because of the antibody clinic. There are also several more virtual programs (History in the Park and Charlotte County Through the Decades) as well as an in-person program, "Looking Back on the Centennial," in December. Jennifer was asked about the Through the Decades exhibit, and she stated it would be stored at Mid-County Library. Theresa mentioned that she'd like to see it displayed in the county, and Commissioner Deutsch suggested the airport. He also asked about a centennial video he participated in, and Jennifer informed the Commissioner that the video was available through the Libraries and History webpage, along with all the virtual programs. He added that it might be nice to have the videos playing at other locations throughout the county, even monitors at the airport, and that this could work for the centennial display as well. Finally, Dianne asked if the Car Show was cancelled, and she was informed that yes, it was cancelled, due to lack of interest.

Question of War Plaques: Valerie wondered if the plaques were located at Veterans Park, but Commissioner Deutsch said they are not located there or at William Gaines Park. Valerie stated that at one time, there was two of them and Claire mentioned that the one from the event center in Punta Gorda was moved to Englewood Park. Commissioner Deutsch said he would bring it up at the Veteran's Council and maybe they would have some information. He also mentioned that there are a half a dozen Veteran's Park in our County. Dianne asked if there was any other discussion, and Commissioner Deutsch asked to talk about the Liberty Tree dedication. Overall, it was a successful event: good turnout, Dianne recorded it, Commissioner Deutsch spoke highly of the participation of an elementary school student and the Boy Scouts.

December Field Trip to Visit Historical Markers: Dianne asked if members were still interested and that in the past, a county vehicle was used. She also asked what sites people wanted to visit and to send that list to Jennifer. Valerie mentioned visiting the cemeteries and Dianne suggested doing another trip just for markers because it would be a lot to do in one trip. Jennifer mentioned that there are some things they should think about as they put together a list of places to visit, including how much time to spend at each site. Commissioner Deutsch echoed Dianne regarding two trips. He also brought up the idea of a newsletter. Theresa asked a couple questions on logistics and suggested committee members could provide the material but someone else could put the newsletter together. Commissioner Deutsch then suggested that if Tourism has an existing newsletter, the committee could contribute to it. Pat suggested putting it on Facebook, Theresa suggested creating their own

page, and Dianne offered to contribute to building the page. Pat also mentioned Florida Weekly is still in circulation.

Pat stated that El Jobean is having a Pre-Veteran's Day picnic on Sat. Nov. 6 @ 10:00 and that it is open to the public, with a local speaker who was awarded the Purple Heart. There are several events happening throughout the county celebrating Veterans Day.

Valerie stated that the Hickory Bluff Chapter (of DAR) is going to be cleaning up that cemetery on October 23. If there are any gardeners interested, the Native Plant Society will be joining them. They will be teaching about native plants as well as selling them. The Hickory Bluff Chapter will also be at the parade.

Theresa stated that the PG History Center will host their annual fundraiser on January 15th, and the theme is the 1920s (postponed due to COVID). She will send a flyer to Jennifer to post in the libraries. Theresa also raised the question of an additional member to the HAC from Boca Grande Historical Society; all members must live in the county and organizations should be in Charlotte County, per the ordinance, though members stated the importance of having other organizations represented.

Public Input: None

Meeting Adjourned:

Next HAC Meeting: - Wednesday, November 10th, 9a.m. at Mid County Regional Library, 2050 Forrest Nelson Blvd., Port Charlotte, FL.

cc:	
Commissioner Ken Doherty	Commissioner Joseph Tiseo
Commissioner Stephen R. Deutsch	Hector Flores, County Administrator
Commissioner Bill Truex	Emily Lewis, Deputy County Administrator
Commissioner Christopher Constance	Tommy Scott, Director, Community Svcs Dept.